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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
Office of Current Intelligence  
7 May 1963

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Insurgency in Iran and Southeast Asia

1. Iran

a. During the past week there has evidently been a lull in the fighting involving tribal insurgents in southwestern Iran. Government units occupy strongpoints throughout the area, and insurgents have broken contact and have withdrawn into hilly areas north or west of Shiraz.

b. The hard core of insurgency continues to be a group of 200 or 300 Boir Ahmadi, possibly including some Sorkhi tribesmen. This band, largely armed with shotguns in the early days of the present insurrection, has now acquired approximately 125 military rifles, several light machineguns, and a few 60- or 81-mm. mortars.

c. The slopes and high valleys of the Zagros mountain range are rapidly filling with Bakhtiari and Qashqai tribesmen. The general condition of these groups and of their flocks is poor and there have been reports of clashes between them and villagers when the flocks have broken into cultivated areas on their way to summer pasture. As yet there has been no report of organized anti-government activity by either Bakhtiari or Qashqai.

2. Laos

a. The relative lull in fighting on the Plaine des Jarres has continued, but an early resumption of serious clashes threatens as a result of the breakdown in negotiations following the 3 May Pathet Lao attack on two ICC helicopters near Phong Savan. Reinforcement activity and maneuvering

ARMY review(s) completed.

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of units is being stepped up by both sides. Indications are that the Pathet Lao have used the recent lull to strengthen their positions at several points in the area. Counteraction is being taken against Meo units north of Xieng Khouang town, and a general Communist effort against other close-in Meo elements is likely.

b. The Pathet Lao appear to be taking steps to interdict aerial resupply to the neutralists, and reportedly have emplaced six or seven Soviet-type anti-aircraft guns within ten miles of Kong Le's headquarters at Muong Phan. Increased Communist activity in central and southern Laos may in part be connected with preparations for increased back-stopping of the Viet Cong effort in South Vietnam.

### 3. South Vietnam

a. The level of Viet Cong activity declined last week from the stepped-up pace noted in late April, although further attacks in company or battalion strength may be expected against opportune targets. US military intelligence in South Vietnam now identifies some 32 Viet Cong battalions--averaging about 300 in strength--throughout the country and 136 separate companies. Two newly accepted battalions are composed primarily of artillery specialists, but do not possess artillery weapons. Four skeletal regimental headquarters are also accepted, and two more may be in process of formation. These headquarters do not serve combat regiments as such, but appear capable of coordinating multiple infantry battalion operations.

b. Continued reports from Laos of North Vietnamese convoys traveling south may indicate a repetition of the 1962 pattern of relatively high-level infiltration into South Vietnam during May, June, and early July.

### 4. Cambodia

a. There has been no significant development in the Cambodian security situation during the past week. Unprecedented security measures were taken during Liu Shao-chi's good will visit. His itinerary was not publicly disclosed, and Chinese and Vietnamese elements were temporarily detained.

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b. The development of more elaborate territorial commands and administrative organizations has been a continuous process in military and government planning. During the past year the Cambodian Army has established itself at company level on a permanent basis in some of the newly created district and subdistrict administrative units. Such deployment of regular army strength shows not only the French tradition of establishing military strongpoints throughout the country but also the desire of the army to give itself territorial control roughly paralleling that of the civil government. Recent training exercises have been carried out at these lowest administrative levels and have provided the army further contact with the local populace.

5. There has been no significant development in the security situation in Thailand during the past week.

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